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Man downloaded hundreds of extreme pornographic images

CHILD PORN ADDICT **AVOIDS PRISON 1**

A PORN addict who downloaded hundreds of child sex videos and images was an adrenaline binger, addicted to 'the shock' of extreme pornography, a court has heard. Mitchell Baxter, of Bolton Road, Ban-

bury, escaped an immediate jail term after admitting three counts of possess-ing indecent images and one count of

possessing bestiality images.
At his sentencing at Oxford Crown Court yesterday, the court heard how his addiction to pornography began when he was a teenager and stemmed from watching his father at his work in an abbatoir.

Alexandra Bull, defending, said that

this had turned him into a thrill seeker and that it led to him seeking out more

and that it led to him seeking out more and more extreme pornography.

She said: "There is a suggestion of a long-term addiction to pornography.

"He had a normal and a happy childhood and it is in his teenage years that he began experimenting with pornography.

"He does suffer from low self-esteem, he was shy... and he was exposed to his father's work at an abattoir and would often see the animals being killed. This appears to have had an impact to lead to seeking gratification through shock."

The court heard that the 51-year-old began with 'video nasties' before the

William Walker will.walker@ngo.com

advent of the internet, which saw him seeking more extreme forms of pornography online.

His addiction was exposed when police raided his home address on April 28, 2014, as part of a crackdown and seized a silver Dell laptop along with a Mono tablet and a memory card.
On analysing the devices they discov-

ered he had downloaded 23 images and videos of the lower category C, 262 of the upper category B, and 101 images and videos of the most extreme pornography, Class A, involving very young

children.

He had used peer-to-peer software to share the pornography and used search terms including 'pre-teen hardcore', 'incest' and 'Lolita'. 'pre-teen

Baxter had also installed special software which permanently erases browser history, called C-Cleaner, although experts could not determine if he had made use of it to delete any images.

The offences took place between 2012 and 2014 according to police analysts who seized the hardware and sifted

through the images. Sentencing, Judge Zoe Smith said: "The children were young, seven and eight years of age. They were moving images and I think a sharing platform as well was used.

"These are real children in these pictures subjected to nothing less than actual torture.

For possessing the class A images he was given a 12-month prison term, for the class B images he was given six months and for class C three months, each to run concurrently.

The jail term was suspended for two

He is also subject to a community order for 24 months with a supervision requirement of 15 days and supervised activity requirement and must pay court costs of £500.

Baxter will remain on the sex offences register for the next 10 years.

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Plenty of offerings at Sam Vahid's Greek stall

Thousands flock to

tom.williams@ngo.com

FOOD and flowers were the order of the day as Banbury basked in the sunshine for its annual food and

Thousands of visitors headed to Mar-ket Place on Sunday to enjoy hot and cold food and drinks, as well as meeting growers and producers.

TV cook Rosemary Shrager, star of ITV's Ladette to Lady, and Masterchef 2015 finalist Nick Bennett amazed watchers with their culinary skills as part of a day-long programme of cook ing demonstrations

Anne Thompson, from Banbury, was attending the event with her partner Adrian Basford.

She said: "It's an event we really look forward to every year. More and more people seem to come and having the sunshine makes such a difference. Everybody seems to be enjoying themselves, it's a brilliant event.

"It is so nice to sample things that you would not normally try. You do not realise how much food is out there until you come to the food festival and you are faced with all these lovely options.

Now in its sixth year, the fair, organised by Banbury Town Council, featured 120 stands including dozens of small, independent retailers selling produce grown in the town and surrounding

Sam Vahid, the co-owner of Mr and Mrs Olive, who was attending his third Banbury Food Fair, said: "It's a great event every year, we always really enjoy trading here.
"We're a family business – it's me, my



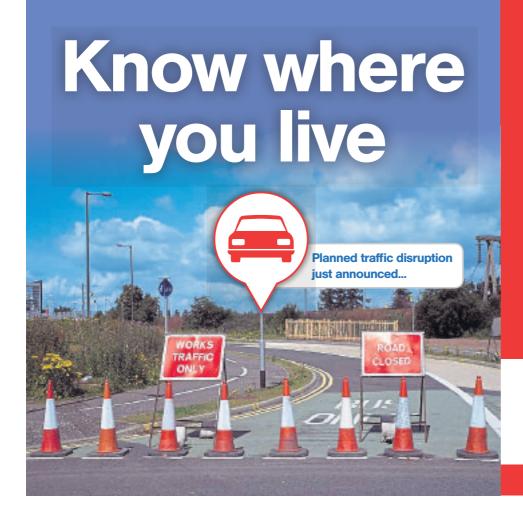
Banbury locals Anne Thomsonat and Adrian Basford enjoy a glass of scrumpy

wife and our little girls – we're all about doing things differently and creating new flavours and textures."

Judges also picked winners in categories such as best fruit and vegetables

and best flowers as part of the event. The former town mayor, councillor

and businesswoman Rosemarie Higham Stevens, who sponsored the show, said: "I am always amazed by the high quality of the entries. I am never disappointed by the skill, imagination and technique of local gardeners, flower arrangers, produce makers, and crafters."



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annual food festival





Chilli farmer Ian Paxton from Church Hanborough







Simon Ward demonstrating a kitchen gadget; right, baker Ian Rowley with some of his pies







Online business directory launched

A NEW online business directory has been launched in Cherwell to help companies thrive in the area

Cherwell District Council has launched the new web page for local businesses to

provide a free platform for advertising. People can search certain companies or a generic term to find out the local businesses available.

Cherwell District Council lead member for estates and the economy Lynn Pratt said: "This is all about boosting spending in the local economy by promoting exactly what's on offer and we are delighted that more than 2,000 businesses in Cherwell have already registered their details.

This website will give businesses of all backgrounds the opportunity to promote their services for free and include information such as website links and

"The directory will give customers looking for a specific service a list of registered companies and alert them to businesses they may not have been

To view the directory visit localcherwell.

Play area equipment set alight by vandals

A PLAY area has been left in ruins after a suspected arson attack burned

equipment to the ground.
Thames Valley Police has launched an urgent appeal after the incident at Princess Diana Park in Banbury. The force believes vandals set alight the equipment in the attack at about 8.30pm on Sunday.

It comes four months after a similar suspected arson at the Bretch Hill play



HomeServe staff join with charity partners to hand over the donations

Firm celebrates raising thousands for charity



Sophie Mogridge smogridge@ngo.com

FROM skydives and car washes to half marathons and bake sales, staff at a Banbury-based company have raised more than

£30,000 for charity. HomeServe – a home emergency repairs business – agreed to match fund its employees' charitable totals, taking the final amount raised across the

country to £68,000. Staff at the firm's offices in Southam Road brought in £2,270 in aid of Katharine House Hos pice in Staffordshire with their fundraising drive, which in-cluded competitions, events, and dress-down days.

The hospice provides care services for people faced with an

illness that cannot be cured and it works to enable patients and those close to them to live life as fully as possible.

HomeServe engineers based across Oxfordshire also saved

up money made from scrap metal to raise £400 in aid of Guide Dogs for the Blind.

John Greaves, brand director, at HomeServe, said: "Supporting our local communities is so important to HomeServe.

"Our people regularly volunteer and give their time to help causes close to their heart.

"A year ago, we asked departments across the business to choose a charity to put their fundraising efforts behind and the response has been absolutely phenomenal.

"Our first celebration event was the chance to see first-hand the organisations our people have helped, and it was a really special day."
Staff marked the major fun-

draising milestone by sharing afternoon tea with a range of charities from across the UK.

Workers from all five of the company's UK office locations - Banbury, Walsall, Preston, Nottingham and London -joined their charitable partners to hand over the money they raised.
The donations will help fund

a range of causes, including £4,737 for new personal life safety equipment for a member of the Midlands Air Ambulance crew, more than £10,000 for Birmingham Children's Hospital's 'The Star' appeal, and a year's worth of fuel for the Midlands Free Wheelers to enable them to provide emergency blood bikes for the NHS.

Water pipes upgrade begins

A NEW project to upgrade a key section of the water network in Bloxham is 'well under way'.

Thames Water engineers are on site in Milton Road for the 14-week scheme, which will see old cast iron pipes replaced with tougher and stronger plastic pipes that are less prone to leaks and bursts.

The project, which will cost £640.000, is a crucial part of Thames Water's mains replacement programme in the Thames Valley in its ongoing effort to reduce leakage and interruptions to water supply.

Thames Water project manager Jon Wickens said: "We've closed Milton Road to start work on the next phase of our mains replacement programme.

"Although we appreciate our

work will cause some delays, feedback from our customers is they want to see us investing money and upgrading our ageing network of pipes to reduce leaks and bursts. They want reliable water supplies that are fit for the future, so it's vital we replace the old pipes."

The road is closed from the iunction with Barford Road to Collins Drive, with a traffic management scheme and diversions in place.

The company said it was a 'complicated job' for engineers, which is the cause of the work closure.

But engineers chose to start the work during the school summer holidays in the hope of causing less disruption.

Thames Water is working with businesses that have been affected by the roadworks to try and minimise the impact.

It has also worked with the local authority where the road closure and diversions are concerned.

Several 'business open as usual' signs have also been strategically placed in the area of the roadworks to inform members of the public that businesses remain trading.

There are also road closures on A41 Kingswood due to roadworks and barrier repairs, alongside temporary traffic lights in Bloxham Road, due to the home development.

It is expected that the water works will be completed by the first week of November.



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Prison for violent party guest who assaulted officer

William Walker will.walker@ngo.com

A MAN who launched into a violent rage at a house party and lashed out at a police officer trying to restrain him, causing him to hit his head against a wall, has been

Karl Kuhne, of Duke Street, Banbury, had been at the party with friends at Ruskin Walk, Bicester, on March 14 this year.

The 39-year old was drunk and an argument ensued, Oxford Crown Court heard at his sentencing on August 17.

While he was in a back garden, other revellers, who were concerned at his growing aggression, went so far as to lock the door so that he couldn't get back inside.

Prosecuting, Alexandra Bull, said: "He was drunk and aggressive and it was locked to prevent

him from re-entering.
"He began bashing on the door

and the police were called."
When he at last got back inside,



Judge Ian Pringle

she told the court, he went on to punch a friend who had come to the party with him, striking him in the head.

Police arrived soon after and tried to subdue him by using sprayed to calm him down, but to no avail.

Miss Bull said: "He was brought downstairs and he was verbally abusive to police and he violently pushed past police officers struggling with him.

"He continued to try to get away and police used spray on him. At this then He then threw his arms out at a police officer who fell and hit his head on a brick wall.

She added: "He said that he regrets the officer's head was hit and said he never meant for that to happen.'

The court also heard how he had 31 previous convictions for a range of offences since 1998 including for criminal damage and assault

In mitigation, his defence team said that he was a self-confessed alcoholic and that despite efforts to combat this, he had fallen into bad company and since relapsed.

Sentencing, Judge Ian Pringle said that the whole incident had been fuelled by his addiction to alcohol.

He said: "I hope you come out of prison with a real resolve that you will put that part of your life behind vou.

"It was not a deliberate assault on the police officer but you pushed out while drunk."

For the three offences of causing criminal damage, assaulting an officer and common assault, and in light of a previous suspended sentence which was activated, he was jailed for 17 months and ordered to pay a victim surcharge.



Potholes in Blackbird Leys. Brian Chadwick says that the estate's potholes, as with these in Balfour Road, are getting worse

Potholes cost council £42k in payouts

DRIVERS whose cars have been damaged after driving into deep potholes on Oxfordshire's roads have claimed nearly

£42,000 in less than two years. Last year Oxfordshire County Council shelled out £25,653 and so far this year has paid out £16,043 to annoyed drivers.

In 2016, the authority paid £1,827.91 to a single motorist whose vehicle had been damaged on the B4526 in South Oxfordshire.

Other large sums paid out include £1,739 and £1,725 after damage caused on South Oxfordshire roads.

And this year's largest successful claim was for £1,130, caused by a pothole on the A4260, just north of Oxford

An Oxford resident sick of the state of the roads near his home in Blackbird Leys said something must be done by both Oxford City and Oxfordshire County

Brian Chadwick, who has lived in the area for over 20 years, said: "It's dreadful. It clearly needs some work. They're really

Rut he said the number of claims was not representative of how much damage around the county because people will not make a claim. He added: "All of the people cannot be bothered. It's too much of a rigmarole. You have got to go to a garage and get a report done.'

The county council said the poor state of roads in Oxfordshire was a 'national situation', but the Government insists it has given millions to Oxfordshire to sort out the problem.

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Slow-burning crime cinema

DETROIT (15, 143 mins) Drama/ Thriller/Action/Romance. John Boyega, Will Poulter, Ben O'Toole, Jack Reynor, Algee Smith, Jacob Latimore, Jason Mitchell, Hannah Murray, Kaitlyn Dever. Director:

Kathryn Bigelow. In 2010, Kathryn Bigelow became the first woman to collect the Academy Award statuette as Best Director for harrowing wartime thriller *The Hurt Locker*.

Depressingly, there hasn't been a single Oscar nomination for a female film-maker since then, and Bigelow was snubbed for her work behind the camera on Zero Dark Thirty, which kindled a political firestorm about the use of torture as an interrogation technique. Her latest white-knuckle ride picks at the fresh wounds of divided race relations in America by reliving one tragic night in a fractured city that resulted in the deaths of three black teenagers.

Released to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the shootings at the Algiers Motel, Detroit is a slow-burning crime drama, which skilfully weaves together multiple character arcs, building to a protracted sequence of gut-wrenching terror that draws uncomfortable parallels with the present day. Screenwriter Mark Boal employs his journalistic training to distil per-sonal accounts into a rich, textured portrait of civil unrest, intimidation and injustice.

His clinical approach to highly emo-tive subject matter pricks our consciences and begs feverish debate about how much progress we have honestly made over the past five decades towards an inclusive, multicultural global community. R&B group The Dramatics, led by charismatic singer Larry Reed (Algee Smith), are poised to perform on the night of July 25 1967, but rioting forces the venue to suspend

Larry and his friend Fred Temple (Jacob Latimore) seek shelter at the Algiers Motel, where they catch the eye of two white guests, Julie Ann (Hannah Murray) and Karen (Kaitlyn Dever). The foursome head to the room of

Carl Cooper (Jason Mitchell), who decides to antagonise local police and the National Guard by firing a starter pistol out of his window The authorities mistake foolhardy

high jinks for sniper fire and armed men in uniform descend on the hotel.

Police officers Philip Krauss (Will Poulter), Flynn (Ben O'Toole) and Demens (Jack Reynor) are among the first on the scene

They line up several guests against a wall and threaten violence unless someone identifies the marksman. Private security guard Melvin Dismukes (John Boyega) witnesses the abuse with mounting horror. When snarling threats lead to tragedy, Krauss urges his compatriots to

Detroit employs dramatic licence during the centrepiece standoff but this doesn't diminish the sound and fury of Boal's script and Bigelow's unfussy direction. Handheld camerawork stokes tension and sweat-drenched performances from a fine ensemble cast are horribly believable.

close ranks.

Most striking is London-born actor Poulter's fearless embodiment of a racist cop, who believes the badge on his chest shields him from the on his chest sine... long arm of the law. RATING: 7.5/10

LOGAN LUCKY (12A, 119 mins) Thriller/Comedy/Romance. Channing Tatum, Adam Driver, Riley Keough, Daniel Craig, Katie Holmes, Farrah Mackenzie, Seth MacFarlane, Sebastian Stan, Director: Steven Soderbergh. Crime still pays for Oscar-winning film-maker Steven Soderbergh,

director of Ocean's Eleven and its sequels, in a criminally entertaining caper, which sacrifices plausibility for quirky characters and generous belly laughs. The unlikely masterminds of Logan

Lucky are downtrodden redneck brothers, whose hare-brained scheme makes one convict snort 'You must be as simple-minded as

people say!"
"People say that?" retort the lovable siblings in stereo.
Rebecca Blunt's lean script engineers unexpected twists and some slickly orchestrated set-pieces Similarities to Soderbergh's other films are inevitable and Blunt play fully addresses the issue via a TV news report, which cutely nicknames the attempted robbery "Ocean's 7-Eleven", referencing the chain of 24-hour convenience stores

across America. Channing Tatum and Adam Driver

are a winning combination as the blue collar thieves, who believe they can outwit the authorities aided by a colourful supporting turn from a heavily tattooed Daniel Craig and a hit-or-miss southern accent.

His exaggerated drawl is pitch perfect, however, next to Seth Mac-Farlane's portrayal of an obnoxious British hillionaire

Vowels and consonants are strangled to the toe-curling limit. He is the film's glaring comic misfire. Construction worker Jimmy Logan (Tatum), a one-time star footballer waylaid by injury, loses his job on the same day he learns that his ex-wife Bobbie Jo (Katie Holmes) intends to relocate to Lynchburg with her new beau.

The move from West Virginia will make it difficult for Jimmy to see his pageant queen daughter Sadie (Farrah Mackenzie), and he threatens legal action.

Jimmy channels his frustration into planning a heist with his one-armed brother Clyde (Driver).

Their target: Charlotte Motor Speedway in North Carolina. Cash from the concessions stands is deposited throughout the day using a network of pneumatic tubes and the Logans are convinced they can break into the vault during a 600-mile race on Memorial Day featuring Nascar driver Dayton White (Sebastian Stan).

The brothers visit convicted safecracker Joe Bang (Craig) and promise to spring him out of jail for the day to access the vault. To protect his cut, Joe insists his numbskull brothers Fish (Jack Quaid) and Sam (Brian Gleeson) take part in the robbery.
Jimmy and Clyde's beautician sister Mellié (Riley Keough) becomes a willing accompliceand the ludicrous scheme swings into action. Logan Lucky gambles on the innate charm and likeability of the principal cast, and they dutifully steal our affections.

Snappy editing maintains a brisk pace and dialogue is peppered with some amusing one-liners . The script plays up hillbilly stereotypes before Soderbergh subverts them for his tantalising finale which intimates this isn't the last we have seen of these light-fingered

RATING: 7/10



Jacob Latimore as Fred Temple and Will Poulter as Philip Krauss in Detroit



Cake Bookworm

Let Us Be True by Alex Christofi is published in hardback by Serpent's Tail, priced £14.99 (ebook £8.99). A man meets a mysterious woman in a bar and falls in love despite his better judgement. It's a tale as old as time. Let Us Be True is set in Paris in 1958, with the aftermath of the Second World War swirling around the German-born lovers like winds of repressed emotion and experience. Elsa, in particular, strives to keep her secrets hidden. while Ralf finds himself caught in another conflict, this time between Algeria and his adopted France. London-based author and editor Alex Christofi draws this political context of living with victory and defeat behind his character-focused love story like a classical painter perfecting the backdrop to a portrait.

Ralf and Elsa are each damaged by the war – he's a 'few years, but an entire generation' older than she – but Christofi's page-turning second novel ensures their relationship is the focal point. Convincing, sympathetic and heartbreakingly

The Last Tudor by Philippa Gregory is published in hardback by Simon & Schuster, priced £20 (ebook £11.99).

Learn you to die!" The story of poor Lady Jane Grey, the Nine Days Queen, is familiar; that of her younger sisters, Katherine and Mary, less so. All were (via their mother's line) Princesses of the Blood and all paid a heavy price for being plausible heirs to the Tudor throne. For the historical novelist

history itself can be a hard taskmaster. On the plus side, each of the Grey girls seems to have been genuinely personable and strug-gled (on the whole, disastrously) to control her own destiny. On the downside, by choosing to write in the first person about each sister in turn, Gregory has limited herself to three increasingly bitter and unreliable narrators, each of whom spent a large proportion of her life in captivity. The prejudices of her protagonists allow Gregory to incorporate all sorts of sensationalist allegations into the novel. But whether ardent, and knowledge able, fans of Tudor-bethan fiction will forgive her portrayal of Eliza-beth I as cold, spiteful, lewd and vacillating is another thing entirely

Proud moment for ambulance trust as it receives gold award

Georgina Campbell gcampbell@nqo.com

IT was a golden moment for an ambulance trust serving Oxfordshire as it received a national honour.

South Central Ambulance Service (SCAS) has received a Ministry's Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) Gold Award; its highest badge of honour for organisations which have signed the Armed Forces Covenant and shown support for those serving.

SCAS is only one of two ambulance services in the county to receive the award

Philip Astle, chief operating officer at SCAS and who retired as a Colonel after a 25-year career in the infantry, said: "We are delighted to be recognised with this prestigious award.

"In my role it is very satisfying to not only find myself meeting so many ex-services personnel whose skills and experience we are able to use to benefit patients in our region, but also I am extremely proud that the trust has such a positive and flexible approach to allow our reservists and cadets to continue their valuable service to our armed forces.

"At all levels of our organisation, from actively supporting Armed Forces Day to training cadet forces, positively recruiting ex-armed forces personnel to encouraging more of our staff to become reservists, we are incredibly proud of our long-standing relationships with and support for our armed services."

The ERS Gold Awards recognise

The ERS Gold Awards recognise employers who actively support the armed forces community in their workplace and also encourage others to follow their lead.

The award scheme, which attracts entries from companies in every part of the country and in the private and public sectors, has seen a rapid increase in participation since it launched in 2014.

Defence Secretary Sir Michael Fallon said: "These companies have shown the gold standard of commitment to supporting members of the Armed Forces, veterans, and their families.

"They have taken meaningful steps to ensure the defence community are not disadvantaged by the sacrifice they make in helping keep this country safe.

country safe.

"The actions of these employers make it crystal clear that regardless of size, location, or sector, employing people with military skills is good for business."

SCAS provides care for more than four million people, covering 3,554 square miles across Oxfordshire, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Hampshire.



Left, Philip Astle, Chief Operating Officer; Right, Paul Jefferies, Assistant Director of Operations



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Oxfordshire Listings

Events

THURSDAY

Dinosaur World: Banbury Museum, Spiceball Park Road, Banbury. Travel back in time to make your own dinosaur land, fossil collage, dinosaur animals, dinosaur mask and even a hatching dinosaur baby. 10.30am-12.30pm or 2-4pm. No need to book, buy your ticket from the museum shop on the day. £2 per child. 01295 753752.

Match Point Murder: The Star, Middle Road, Stanton St John. A 90-minute joyride of desire, deceit and death... will you work out whodunit? An interactive theatre experience that moves around the venue. Bottle of bubbly for winning team. 7pm. £25 inc. BBQ & drink, £15 performance-only. 07889 231000. Walk for Health: Vale & Downland Museum, 19 Church Street, Wantage. 10am. Free. 01235 771447.

FRIDAY

Henley Handmade Fair: Stonor Park, Chiltern Hills, Henley on Thames. Marquees and outdoor markets. Live music, including sets from The Haywood Sisters and Crooked Style. 10am. £7-£8. 01425 272711.

Mini Indi: Braziers Park, Braziers Park, Ipsden. A programme of independent films representing an invitation to filmmakers to show their work and to take part, with their audience, in a convened discussion about the content, their passion and the practicalities of making their film. Drop in for a film, come for the day or stay the bank holiday weekend. There will be opportunities to explore Braziers estate, meet the community, BBQ and take tea on the terrace. 6pm. Braziers' three-tier pricing system applies. 01491 680221.

SOFO Holiday Kids Clubs: Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum, Park Street, Woodstock. Mini Beast Buddies! Get inspired by your favourite creepy crawly. Games, outdoor fun, crafts and quizzes. 10am-12.30pm. £8 per child. 01993

Wantage Country Market: Vale & Downland Museum, 19 Church Street, Wantage. Wantage WI. 9.30am. Free admission. 01235 771447.

Alfies Fest Open Mic and Cider

SATURDAY

Festival: King Alfred's Head, 31 Market Place, Wantage. Music, cider and BBQ. The music will be an open mic event. Send an email if you would like to participate. 1pm. Free. 01235 771595. Alice in Waterland Walk: Museum of Oxford, St Aldate's, Oxford. A leisurely circular walk of 75/90 minutes around beautiful Christ Church Meadow with local historian and author Mark Davies. 11am. £6. To book visit aliceinwaterland 26august eventbrite.co.uk 01865 798254.

Carterton Lions Car Boot Sale: Carterton Recreation Ground, Alvescot Road, Carterton. 8am. Stall £6/£12, buyers free. 01993 772241.

Film and Splash: Enjoy a fun swim session in our superb swimming pool followed by an aquatic-themed movie in the Amey Theatre. The morning begins with swimming from 9.00am-10.30am at the Abingdon School Sports Centre and Moana (PG) will begin at 11am. Snacks and refreshments available. 9am. £6/£4. 01235 849063.

History & Nature Rides: Chinnor & Princes Risborough Railway, Station Approach, Station Road, Chinnor. Children £1 with any accompanied by a fare-paying adult on History & Nature ride. Ride on our vintage diesel bubblecar and during the hour long trip you will receive informative but lighthearted commentary from our railway volunteers about the history of the line

and the local area it traverses and to also see some of our area's flora and fauna as we gently wend our way along the foothills of the Chillterns. Trains at 10.30am, 12pm, 1.45pm & 3.15pm. Adult £11, senior £10, child £1.07979 055366.

Mini Indi: Braziers Park, Braziers Park, Ipsden. A programme of independent films representing an invitation to filmmakers to show their work and to take part, with their audience, in a convened discussion about the content, their passion and the practicalities of making their film. Drop in for a film, come for the day or stay the whole bank holiday weekend. There will be opportunities to explore Braziers estate, meet the community, BBQ and take tea on the terrace. 6pm. Braziers' three-tier pricing system applies. 01491 680221.

Monthly Craft Market: St. Peter & St. Paul Church, Church Street, Deddington. 9am. Free.

The Elephant's Garden: The Story Museum, 42 Pembroke Street, Oxford. Discover the Elephant's Garden and work with Jane to create a magical paper collage garden of your own. 2pm. £7/£5. 01865 790050.

SUNDAY

Cream Teas: The Reading Room, The Green, Combe. 2.30pm. 01993 898348. Minster Lovell Beer Festival and Village Day: Wash Meadow, Old Minster, Minster Lovell. Selection of cask ales, ciders, wines and prosecco as well as soft drinks, BBQ, cakes and teas plus music, children's rides, duck races and stalls raising money for village organisations. 12pm.

National Garden Scheme: Aston Pottery, Aston, Bampton. Five borders which flower from June until November, set around Aston Pottery's Gift Shop and Café. Wheelchair access. Plant sale. Home-made teas. 12pm. Donations invited

Mini Indi: Braziers Park, Braziers Park, Ipsden. A programme of independent films representing an invitation to filmmakers to show their work and to take part, with their audience, in a convened discussion about the content, their passion and the practicalities of making their film. Drop in for a film, come for the day or stay the bank holiday weekend. There will be opportunities to explore Braziers estate, meet the community, BBQ and take tea on the terrace. 6pm. Braziers' three-tier pricing system applies. 01491 680221.

Ramblers walk: Car park at rear of King & Queen PH, Wheatley. 13-mile good-paced walk via Toot Baldon. Bring a picnic. 10am. 01865 708736

Towersey Fringe: Towersey Playing Fields, Thame Road, Towersey, Thame. An afternoon of family fun with music, local beers, Pimms and prosecco, children's amusements, specialist food stalls and adult pampering, followed by an evening of four comedians (not for the children) from 7pm. 12pm. Free. 01844

Wheatley Afternoon Care Boot Sale: Waterstock Golf Club, Off junction 8a M40 near to motorway services, Thame Road, Wheatley. 1pm. Sellers £5, buyers 50p. 07874 855514.

MONDAY

Abingdon Urban Race: Abbey Meadows, Abbey Close, Abingdon. Adventure race around the streets, alleys and parks of Abingdon. Organised by Thames Valley Orienteering Club. Chip timing, start a course any time up to midday. Courses close at 2pm. Various courses, with longer ones for runners (5 to 8k), and junior and family courses too (1 to 5k). 10am. £6 for short courses; £14 for long courses.

Mini Indi: Braziers Park, Braziers Park, Ipsden. A programme of independent

To get an event of any kind listed here, enter the details into our easy-to-use online database at thisisoxfordshire.co.uk/events

Please add your event no later than ten days before the day of publication.

films representing an invitation to filmmakers to show their work and to take part, with their audience, in a convened discussion about the content, their passion and the practicalities of making their film. Drop in for a film, come for the day or stay the bank holiday weekend. There will be opportunities to explore Braziers estate, meet the community, BBQ and take tea on the terrace. 6pm. Braziers' three-tier pricing system applies. 01491 680221.

National Garden Scheme: Church Farm Field, Church Lane, Epwell, Banbury. Woods, arboretum with wild flowers (planting begun in 1992); over 90 different trees and shrubs in 4.5 acres. Paths cut through trees for access. Lawn tennis court and croquet lawns. 2pm. Adult 92: chd free.

Oxford Tri Sprint Triathlon: Radley College Sports Centre, Kennington Road, Radley. The swim will take place in the college's newly refurbished 25m indoor pool. You will then head out on your bike into the picturesque Oxfordshire countryside, the course is fairly flat with a couple of gentle inclines. The run course then takes you on two laps of a car-free loop, in and around the college grounds. oxfordtri.co.uk/oxford-tri-sprint-triathlon 7am. £40. 07880 716761.

Ramblers walk: Red Lion PH, Tetsworth. Seven-mile walk in the area, with a pub stop at the end. Walk unsuitable for large dogs. 10am. 01844 208517.

Steeple Aston Flower and Fun Dog Show: Steeple Aston Village Hall and Recreation Ground, Fir Lane, Steeple Aston. Vegetables, flowers, cookery, handicraft, photography and children's classes. Teas, handicraft and produce stalls, sideshows and attractions including children's entertainer, bouncy castle, bowling, other games. 2pm. steepleaston.org.uk/clubs-societies/gardening/#horticultural Adults £2. Under 16s free. 01869 340512.

TUESDAY

Bicester & Kidlington Ramblers: Car park, Deddington. A moderately difficult 6.5-mile circular walk from Deddington to Clifton by the River Cherwell.This is the start of a figure of 8 walk. If walking in the afternoon, please bring a picnic lunch or purchase food in Deddington. 100am. 07939 826412

Children's Craft at the Arboretum: Harcourt Arboretum, A4074, Nuneham Courtenay. 1pm. £5 adults, children go

Kidlington & District Historical Society: The Willow Tree Cafe, Moorside Place, The Moors, Kidlington. A talk by Martin Wainwright entitled 'Rotten Votes and Secret Gold – The tale of Frank Grey MP of Shipton Manor'. 7.50pm. Visitors £3.50 under 26's 50p. 01865 375758.

Tea Dance: Woodstock Social Club, 44 Oxford Street, Woodstock. 2pm. £2. 01993 811473.

WEDNESDAY

Carterton Pantomime Enrolment: Carterton Community College, Upavon

Carterton Community College, Upavon Way, Carterton. Take part in ACT's Christmas panto Cinderella. Pop in anytime between 6pm-8pm. Rehearsals will then be every Wed evening with Sun afternoon rehearsals beginning in Oct. Performances will be in early Dec. One off enrolment fee of £10 per person.

More information at actingcommunitythingumybogs.co.uk Children's Workshop – Bushcraft:

Sutton Courtenay Environmental Education Centre, Sutton Courtenay Road, Abingdon. Create a camp fire, cook a snack on a fire and try your hand at traditional woodland skills. Aimed at children 7+ years. Booking essential. 10am. £4 per child. 01235 862024.

Grove RFC Ladies Rugby: Grove RFC, Recreation Lane, Grove. 7pm. free taster then £70 annual membership. 07970292322.

Messy Church Does Science:

Rutherford Appleton Laboratory, Harwell Campus, Harwell. Hands-on exploration of both science and God. All welcome. Book in advance. 2pm. Free. 01235 858246

SOFO Family Open Afternoons: Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum, Park Street, Woodstock. Drop in 2-4pm. £2 per child. Adults and under 5s free. 01993 810210. Woodland Adventure: Earth Trust

Centre, Little Wittenham. An expedition for 5-8 year olds. Use your detective skills to explore, build and play in the woods. £10am. £4 suggested donation per child. 01865 407792.

Music

THURSDAY

Joe's Bar & Grill, 260 Banbury Road, Oxford: The Big Blue. Blues. 8pm. Free.

The Jericho Tavern, 56 Walton Street, Oxford: Cover Me featuring Random Article & more. Local acts with an evening of classic covers. 7pm. £7.

The Cock Inn, The Green, Combe: Nick Gill. Classic jazz and ragtime piano/ vocals. 8pm. Free.

FRIDAY

Banbury Cross, Butchers Row, Banbury: Badlands. Rock and pop covers band. Free entry. 9pm. 01295 279014.

Horse & Groom, The Green, Milcombe, Banbury: Ann Marie. Free. 9pm. 01295722142. The Angel, Market Square, Witney:

Nikki Petherick. Local vocal guitarist. Free. 9pm. 01993 703238. **The Northcourt, Abingdon Utd,**

Northcourt Road, Abingdon: The Alter Eagles. Eagles tribute. £12 advance, £14 on door. 7.30pm. 01235 203203.

Victoria Arms, Mill Lane, Marston: Decades. Rock and pop. Free. 9pm. 01865 241382.

The Victoria Arms, Mill Lane, Old Marston: Decades. Rock and glam covers duo. 8.30pm. Free.

The Wheatsheaf, 129 High Street, Oxford: Terminus, Silent Jack, Fyresky. Rock/metal. 7.45pm. £8 (adv), £10 (otd).

SATURDAY

Buscot Park Theatre, Buscot Park, Faringdon: Piano Recital. Thomas Graff plays the Granados 'Goyescas' Piano suite. £16. 7.30pm. 01367 244655.

Cricketers, Temple Road, Cowley: The Summits. Free. 9pm. 01865 718459 Harcourt Arboretum, Peacock Gate, Nuneham Courtenay: Straight out the Crate, soul and rock band. £20, child £12, family £50. 6pm. 01865 311711

Headington Conservative Club, 60

Windmill Road, Headington: Country & Western with Capricorn. £5. 8pm. 01865 439400.

Marston Royal British Legion, Hadow Road, Marston: Kev G. Free. 8pm. 01865 243991.

The Wheatsheaf, High Street, Oxford: Brightworks, Pfaff, Semi Urban Fox. £4.50, cheaper in advance. 8.20pm. 01865 395327.

University Church of St Mary the Virgin, High Street, Oxford: Oxford Proms – Dance and Dramatics. £12 students, Under 18s half price. 7.30pm. 01865 305305.

Wine Vaults, Parson Street,

Banbury: Devastation. Rock and pop as part of the Vault festival. Free. 3.15pm. 01295 261281.

The Victoria Arms, Mill Lane, Old Marston: Billy Sullivan. Elvis Presley tribute 8.30nm Free

The Cellar, Frewin Court, Oxford: Easter Island Statues, Tarpit, Juniper Nights. EP launch for local indie rockers. 7.30pm. £5 (adv), £8 (otd).

The Harcourt Arms, Cranham Terrace, Jericho: Hex Collective, Tamal(es). Poetry and folk. 8pm. Free. The Seacourt Bridge, West Way,

The Seacourt Bridge, West Wa Botley: Sapphires. 9pm. Free.

SUNDAY

The Wheatsheaf, 129 High Street, Oxford: Ash Lewis, Superloose, Purple May, Freddy Le Cragg, Sammy Pope & Sarah Gray. 3.30pm-8.30pm. Free. The Victoria Arms, Mill Lane, Old

The Victoria Arms, Mill Lane, Old Marston: Pete McCray. Classic soul & reggae. 3pm. Free.

MONDAY

Rose Revived, Newbridge, Witney: Alvin Roy's Reeds Unlimited. Jazz. 7.30pm. Free.

TUESDAY

Gladiator Club, 263 Iffley Road, Oxford: Eastside Rhythm Kings. Trad jazz. 7.30pm. Free.

WEDNESDAY

All Saints' Church, Lime Walk, Headington: All Saints' Summer Festival of Music & The Arts. Featuring Alistair Walker, tenor. Free. 8pm.

Theatre

Blackwell's Bookshop, 51 Broad Street, Oxford: Until Aug 26, *The Full Bronte*. Combining comedy, storytelling, music, and games. 7pm. £22/£20/£18/£16. 01865 766266.

The Bullingdon, 162 Cowley Road, Oxford: Aug 26, Sean Percival and Andre Vincent. Glee comedy. 7.45pm. £15.95. Sep 2, Craig Murray, Joe Sutherland, George Egg and Paul Thorne. Glee comedy. 7.45pm. £15.95. 01865 810000.

The Old Fire Station, 40 George Street, Oxford: Until Aug 26, Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street. RicNic. 7.30pm. £12/£10 concessions. 01865 263990.

Oxford Playhouse, Beaumont Street, Oxford: Until Aug 26, The Gruffalo. Various times. £13.Aug 28-29, Michael McIntyre: Work in Progress. 8pm. £24.50. Aug 31, John Cleese In Conversation. 7pm. £30. 01865 305305.

Pitt Rivers Museum, South Parks Road, Oxford: Aug 25, Cult Screens at the Museums: Moulin Rouge. 7pm. Ticket prices vary, book online. 01865 270027

Braziers Park, Braziers Park, Ipsden: Aug 26, The Bundle – An Asylum Seeker's Story. 7.30pm. £5. 01491680221.

The Manor House, Northampton Road, Weston on the Green: Aug 25-26, *Playing the King*. Creation Theatre. 7.30pm. £18-£22, £62 for ticket including dinner on Sat. 01865 766266.

CakeSport banburycake.co.uk/sport

Puritans extend their super start

Three wins out of three keeps Ford's men top of the division

BANBURY United's perfect Hitchin Town start to the season continued with a convincing 3-0 victory at Hitchin Town.

George Nash, Jefferson Louis and Luke Carnell were on target as the Puritans stayed top of the Evo-Stik South League Premier after three games.

It took just ten minutes for Mike Ford's side to open the scoring, when Nash fired in on the rebound after Ravi Shamsi's shot was parried.

Hitchin had chances before the all-important second goal arrived just after the hour mark.

Tom Winters' free-kick was only cleared as far as Louis, who brilliantly fired into the top cor**Banbury United**

ner from the edge of the box.

Carnell added a third goal with a deflected effort 20 minutes from time to keep the Puritans top on goal difference ahead of Saturday's home game with Bishop's Stortford.

Banbury have also discovered their Emirates FA Cup first qualifying round opponents.

They will host fellow Premier Division side Tiverton Town on Saturday, September 2.

Banbury Utd: Harding, Hawtin, Peake-Pijnen, Nash Johnson, Carnell, Westbrook, Shamsi (Humphreys 60), Louis (Martin 90), McDonagh (Howards 73), Winters. Subs not used: Blackstock, Bradbury. Attendance: 391.



George Nash (left) fired Banbury United in front ten minutes into their game at Hitchin Town

West heroics earn tie

BANBURY were incredibly involved in their second tie of the Home Counties Premier League season.

Hosts Finchampstead elected to field and Craig Haupt was dismissed first ball, before Lloyd Sabin fell to leave the visitors 27-2.

Olly Clarke and Charles Hill (50) steadied the ship, before Richard West (53) put on 81 with the latter to get to 151-3. Once they fell, Banbury

finished on 200-7. Finchampstead lost wickets

regularly, but were in contention on 165-7, thanks to Simon Bell (46) and Andrew House (32).

They looked set for victory as they only trailed by five runs after 47 overs.

But West dismissed James Woodford, before running out Bell in the 49th over to earn Banbury a tie.

BANDORI	
L Sabin c Carter b Marles	14
C Haupt c J Dewes b Carter	
O Clarke c Bell b Woodford	25
C Hill c A Dewes b Coetzee	50
R West Ibw J Dewes	53
E Phillips b Carter	13
W Briggs run out	3
J Wilkins not out	10
O Wright not out	6

CRICKET

Total (7 wkts, 50 ovs)...... Fall: 1-0, 2-27, 3-70, 4-151, 5-166, 6-179, 7-187. Bowling: Coetzee 10-3-31-1, Carter 9-3-25-2, Marles 4-0-17-1, A Dewes 5-1-17-0, Woodford 6-0-29-1, J Dewes 10-1-33-1. Uttlev 6-0-31-0.

FINCHAMPSTEAD

House c Briggs b Hill	
Dewes c West b Cheema4	
Marles c Phillips b Wright	
Rogers c Phillips b Wright	
Bell run out	
redgen b Clarke9	
oetzee c Sabin b Cheema	
Carter b Clarke	
lewes run out4	
Voodford c Phillips b West11	
Uttley not out1	
xtras	
otal (all out, 49 ovs)	
1: 1-13, 2-49, 3-84, 4-91, 5-104, 6-140, 7-165, 8-176,	

ing: Cheema 10-3-26-2 Taylor 8-0-47-0 Wright 10-1-48-2, Hill 4-0-18-1, West 8-0-28-1, Clarke 9-2-27-2

Banbury 12pts, Finchampstead 12

A MINUTE'S silence was held at Banbury Cricket Club on Saturday in tribute to their former scorer Rod Clarke, who died last week aged 74.

'Nobby' Clarke, who also scored for Oxfordshire, died at his home in Bicester, after a long illness.

His funeral will be held at **Banbury Crematorium on** Friday, September 8 (1pm).

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Banbury Cake







Mallories in Stratton Audley, above, comes with outbuildings, pictured top right. The New House, bottom right, has an annexe in the garage and extension potential

Keep it in family with generations together

Gill Oliver gill.oliver@nqo.com

HIGHER prices and a squeeze on wages are making it hard for younger househunters to afford a place of their own.

Add in the ageing population, with many over-65s rattling around in properties that are too big for them, and the solution seems

According to research by insurer Aviva, there are 1.5 million households containing two or more families and this is forecast to rise to 2.2 million by 2025.

Bringing multiple generations under one roof can make perfect sense. If it's cleverly designed, everyone keeps their independence but someone is always around to babysit, sign for parcels or switch on the oven.

This is already boosting demand

for homes with annexes or coach

houses attached, say agents. An example is Mallories in Stratton Audley, a period house set in a half-an-acre, which comes with planning permission to convert outbuildings into two cottages, each with two bedrooms.

The house includes a sitting room, dining room, kitchen/breakfast room, conservatory and study, plus three upstairs bedrooms

The walled garden includes a

drive, lawn and fruit trees

Mallories is on the market at £700,000. Contact agents John D Wood on 01865 311522 or see johndwood.co.uk.

Another candidate is the New House in Middle Barton; a property in a third of an acre, which comes with a detached double-storey annexe/double garage.

Overlooking the River Dorn, the four-bedroom house has extension potential, say agents.

It includes a living room, sitting room, kitchen and dining room, plus three double bedrooms and one single.

The annexe has a kitchenette. shower and vaulted room above,

reached via a spiral staircase.
There is also driveway, parking, a lawn, a summerhouse, miniorchard, greenhouse and shed.

New House is on the market at £780,000. Call Cridlands on 01869 343600 or see cridlands.co.uk

TO ADVERTISE IN THE BANBURY CAKE **CALL CHRIS KING on 01865 425306**



Due to the proposals coming into place next year regarding the tenant fee ban it is more important than ever to use an agent. We at Martin & Co can assist you through these changes, and shield you from the worst of the effects.

There is likely to be a change in the behaviour of tenants, and rather than deciding to stay at the property which they live in, not having to pay tenant fees, will allow the tenants to freely move home without any costs, this would leave the landlords with an empty property and needing to find a new tenant quickly.

The proposed 4 week maximum deposit will also impact landlords. With only 4 weeks it is likely that there will be an increase in tenants not paying the final month's rent and simply disappearing, leaving the landlord with just the deposit to cover the rent and unable to cover the costs for any damage that may have been caused; and with the landlord potentially with a long winded and expensive court action to reclaim any damages, if the tenant can be traced.

This is why letting your property through us at Martin and Co is now so important. Tenants used to fall into two categories: those who wanted to use an agent and those who did not. Tenants usually preferred renting through agencies as it gave them security, peace of mind and a better chance that the property was regulated, safe and secure and maintained. The difference is that the cost was slightly higher with reference and administration charges.

Tenants who preferred renting privately usually will not be able to pass the checks put into place by the agencies to protect their clients (you the landlords) or they wished to act in a way that would not be preferred by the landlord and didn't want the checks that the agents take to uncover this behaviour. This is, most predominantly subletting.

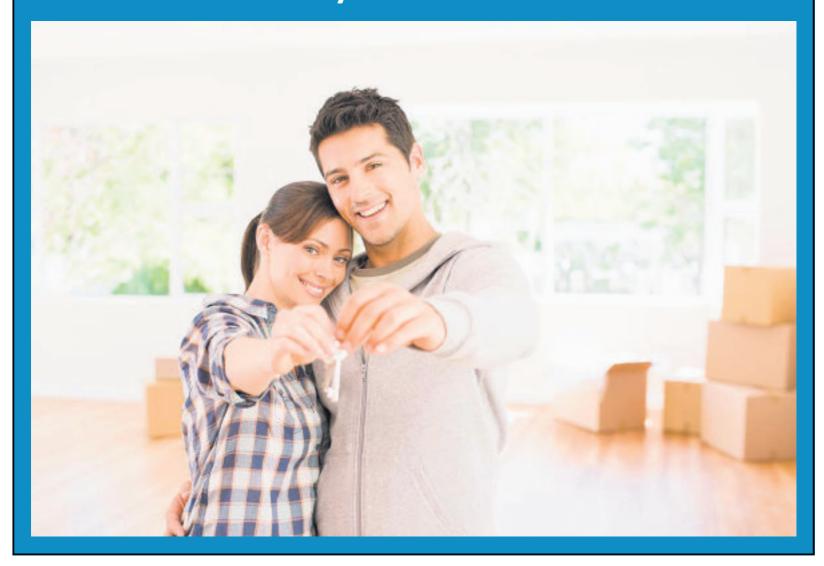
If a tenant is deemed a bad tenant such as: consistent late rent payers; causes damage; breaks the tenancy agreement; upsets the neighbours; smokes in the house, causes a disturbance or worse still stays in the home not paying any rent forcing you to remove through the legal system at a significant loss of rental income, as well as bailiff, solicitor and court costs. This is almost certainly revealed at our admin and reference stage so that we can advise to reject this type of tenant for your property. If the tenant does pass our full and stringent tests then insurance is recommended to cover the eventuality of a personal or circumstance change during the term.

Having a good agency can definitely more than ever protect your investment, keep your property tenanted and steer you away from the tenants other landlords don't want. Remember in the long run the costs will be reflected in rents not from landlords or agents. Genuine tenants like having an office to come into and building a relationship with their agency. They appreciate the security that this brings and the help with overcoming problems. We believe that we are the most approachable agency in town. We are the only agency perfectly positioned at the centre of commerce to the front of Banbury's busiest shopping centre. We employ friendly knowledgeable staff that will help landlords and tenants through the minefield of renting.





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SALES



Cherry Close

OPEN DAY SATURDAY 26TH AUGUST 12:00 - 01:00 PM

A spacious three bedroom family home situated in the sought after village of Bloxham comprising; Entrance porch; Entrance hall; Lounge/diner; Kitchen; Three bedrooms; Bathroom; Garage; Off road parking; Front and rear gardens.

£350,000



St Mary's View

A 3 bedroom town house within walking distance to town center. Comprising: entrance hall, lounge, kitchen, C/R, family bathroom, 3 bedrooms witen-suite to master. Outside there is off road parking and rear courtyard garden.

£240,000



Kings Way

A spacious 4 bedroom semi detached home situated in the south of Banbury. The property comprises entrance hall, lounge, dining room, recently fitted kitchen diner and cloak room. Upstairs there are four generous bedrooms with ensuite bathroom to the master and separate family bathroom Outside benefits from ample off road parking, garage, front and rear gardens.

£320,000



Hobby Road

An immaculate 2 bedroom property situated in the popular Longford Park development. Comprising entrance hall, doak room, kitchen, lounge/diner, two double bedrooms, bathroom, garage off road parking, front and rear gardens.

£240,000



High Acres, Banbury

An immaculate 4 bed detached property situated on the popular Cherwell Heights are of Banbury. Briefly comprising; Entrance hall, lounge, extended kitchen and dining room, downstairs cloakroom, 4 bedrooms with built in wardrobes and family bathroom. Outside benefits from ample off road parking, front and rear gardens and garage.

£350,000



Peoples Place

A large two bedroom apartment with allocated parking. Entrance hall open plan kitchen and living room. The property benefits from integrated appliances. There are two double bedrooms with fitted wardrobes. Good size bathroom with bath and shower and W/C. Situated within walking distance to the town centre and train station.

£182,500



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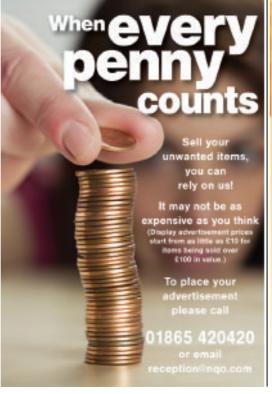




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a loaf in faltering French or tapas in stuttering Spanish, you'll recognise the sense of achievement when you're finally understood.Because language is at the heart of everything we do, there's always going to be a demand for those who can teach it in all its forms, from the spoken word to sign language, Morse code to Java.

While language specialists might once have been restricted to teaching French or German, the opportunities today are many and various.Along with maths

are some of the most influential during those formative school years. Most of us can still remember the name of our English teacher but geography master? Forget it

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Motors - first for used cars

Used Car Road Test

by Jonathan Crouch



Mazda CX-5 makes good







MAZDA CX-5 (2012-2017) MODELS COVERED: 5-door SUV [2.0 petrol / 2.2 diesel]

Introduction

For years now, the market's fastest growing segment has been that for Qashqai-like Crossovers and compact soft-roading SUVs. If you want a used car that offers the best of both and offers fine driving dynamics, low running costs, practical space and decent value, then it's hard to ignore this one, the first generation version of Mazda's CX-5. Not the first car of this sort you might just think it to be the best.

The History

Mazda was late to the Qashqaiclass Crossover party but when it did at last turn up with a model in this segment – in 2012 with this first generation CX-5 model - we found that the job had been done properly. So is this a soft-roading RAV4 or Freelander-style compact SUV with at least a modicum of off road gumption? Or the or the kind of family hatchback-on-stilts the industry calls a 'Crossover', Qashqai or Peugeot 3008-style models better suited to Sainsburys than the Serengeti? We're going to let you make up your own mind on that one

make up your own mind on that one. Probably, the definition doesn't matter. Depending on your preference, you could pigeonhole this CX-5 either way -which is exactly as Mazda wants it. That's why it created modestly powered entry-level 2WD versions for school run mums. And pokey all-wheel driven variants with a tougher remit further up the range. Here's a brand who reaped the benefits of late arrival to this particular party. A maker who looked carefully at what was available, what buyers wanted and what they actually needed. A measured approach that paid dividends. This MK1 model CX-5 sold until it was replaced by a second generation model in mid-2017.

What To Look Fo

Most CX-5 buyers were came across in our ownership survey were enthusiastic about this car but inevitably, there were a few rogue examples; make sure you avoid them by checking out the things below on your test drive

below on your test drive.
One owner had a problem with faulty engine injectors necessitating frequent oil changes. Another found his manual model would con-

tinually get stuck in reverse and would crunch in 1st and 2nd gear. Another found he was getting through tyres at an unreasonable rate – 3 sets in a year, the issue compounded by the fact that only two brands make tyres for a CX-5, so prices are high for replacement rubber. One owner experienced a knocking sound on full lock, an issue traced to faulty suspension mounts. And another found the istop engine start/stop system on his car ceased to work.

Otherwise, the issues we came across were relatively minor ones. Check out the infotainment system; there were lots of reports of faulty Bluetooth connections and faulty sat nav set-ups. A lot of these issues can be solved by software updates and a larger SD card. One owner had a faulty rear parking sensor. And another found warning lights randomly coming on in the dash.

On The Road

The key to understanding this CX-5 is getting to the bottom of what Mazda means when it uses the term 'SKYACTIV Technology'. Basically, it's Mazda's programme for radical lightweight efficiency and it debuted on this car. This claims clear ben-

efits in terms of economy and emissions but it also means that the CX-5 is a vehicle that drives quite differently to most of its key rivals. And by 'differently', we mean better.

The entry-level petrol model weighs little more than 1,400kg

weighs little more than 1,400kg - which is remarkable. To put that into perspective, a similarly-sized Land Rover Freelander weighs over 1700kgs, which means that you could sit two average sized adults and a pair of kids in a Mazda CX-5 and it would still weigh less than an empty Freelander. You'll feel that this car is light on its feet as soon as you pull away. Mazda has worked hard at reducing friction in the driverrain and the gearbox feels light, the pedals perfectly spaced and the steering responsive.

The top range-topping diesel version offers four-wheel drive and a twin-turbocharged 2.2-litre unit putting out a healthy 175PS. With the powerplant in this form, you don't get the option of a front-wheel drive-only variant, something that so many customers for this kind of car now seem to want. Still, this is available on a model with the detuned 150PS version of this unit. And 2WD is the only choice if you go for the entry-level 165PS 2.0-litre

petrol variant.

There's a directness that you get at the helm and a tautness to this Mazda's responses that is unlike anything else in this class. Get out of one of these after driving hard and into a Freelander or a CR-V and you'd do well not to plough clean off the road at the first corner you come to. For keen drivers, this is the best car in its class. It's as simple as that.

Overall

The CX-5 isn't one of those cars that jumps out at you on first acquaintance. But as with many Mazdas, its modesty hides a product packed with innovation. The result is excellent packaging, class-leading economy and emissions and driving dynamics that set a new benchmark in this sector. Add in a high specification and competitive pricing and you've a compelling proposition.

Nothing less was necessary given the Japanese maker's tardiness in entering this segment. The styling may not be anything special but everything else about this car is. It's yet another example of Mazda going its own way, doing things differently. Which means? Well something quite simple really. Looking for a car of this kind? Start here first.



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